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AUTHOR Karl, Marion C.
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ABSTRACT

A step-by-step description is given of the development of a model for the improvement of student teacher relationships. This model was created by a student forum in workshop sessions with teachers, other school personnel, and parents. In this report the design of the workshops is described, and the recommendations resulting are outlined. Included in the recommendations are behavior objectives for teachers, students, counselors, administrators, school boards, and parents. Also included are samples of forms used in the workshops. (JD)

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IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONS

Project of 1977-1978
A.I.U. Student Forum

Marion C. Karl

Alleghany Intermediate Unit
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

November 6, 1978

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ALLEGHENY INTERMEDIATE UNIT
STUDENT FORUM

Advisor
Marion C. Karl
Director of Research

Group Dynamics Consultant
Gloria Bakin

Karen Trice - Upper St. Clair
President

Ed DeLaTorre - Hampton
Vice President

Mary Cusack - Mt. Lebanon
Secretary

Bob Tomaszewski - Babcock
Senior Executive Board Member

Diane Hollis - Penn Hills
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Senior SAB Member

Tom Van Cleef - Chartiers Valley
Junior SAB Member

Carl Christ - Fox Chapel
Senior SAB Alternate

Cheri White - Elizabeth Forward
Junior SAB Alternate

Communications Committee

Ron McGoogan - Baldwin-Whitehall
Jim Russell - Mt. Lebanon
Theresa Schindler - Baldwin-Whitehall
Barbie Simpson - Upper St. Clair

IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONS
AN A.I.U. STUDENT FORUM PROJECT

Introduction

In the summer of 1977, 30 high school students participated in a Student Forum sponsored leadership training workshop at Indiana University. The purpose of the workshop was to help Forum members acquire the skills needed to organize, direct, and carry out the work of the Forum. In addition, time was set aside to plan the focus of the 1977-78 Forum year.

One of the most important outcomes of the workshop was the identification of poor teacher-student relationships as the main causal factor of most school problems. The workshop, funded by a grant from the Henry Clay Frick Educational Commission, encouraged free discussion of group dynamics as they relate to both leadership situations and school problems. Over and over, comments were made about the inability of students to reach teachers, to discuss problems, to receive academic aid, or to have teachers participate in student-related activities. Student disillusionment with teachers was very evident.

Workshop leaders, on the other hand, were well aware that teacher disillusionment with students was well documented by the news media, in books, and in teachers contracts. The situation seemed to be one of apathetic teachers having to deal with apathetic students who have to deal with apathetic teachers, etc. The result -- vandalism, disrespect, poor discipline, lack of pride in school and community, loss of love of learning, low academic achievement, job dissatisfaction, few school activities, and a general disintegration of the learning environment for both teachers and students.

As discussions progressed, students began to voice comments that showed they realized the two-sidedness of the problem. They expressed a real desire to try to deal with the situation through the Forum and to make the task their primary project for the 1977-78 school year.

It was agreed that a proposal should be written to apply for funds that would enable the Forum to bring teachers and students together to work on the development of a model to improve teacher-student relations. Such a proposal was presented to the Frick Educational Commission in October, 1977 and funding was granted in December (See Appendix A).

The proposal objectives were stated as follows:

1. To develop a model to improve teacher-student relationships.
2. To sensitize students to the ideas and feelings of teachers regarding the teacher-student relationship.
3. To sensitize teachers to the ideas and feelings of students regarding the teacher-student relationship.
4. To provide a non-threatening environment in which students and teachers may interact openly and honestly.
5. To promote dissemination of the outcomes of the program.

In order to accomplish these tasks, it was proposed that 20 teachers be invited to work with Forum members during 3 all-day meetings to be held in February, March, and April of 1978. The cost of their substitutes would be paid by the Frick grant.

In November, 6 principals from the Secondary Principals Association worked with the members to help them form the criteria for soliciting participating teachers and to bring to light any consideration which could influence the outcome of the program.

The following criteria were decided upon:

1. Teachers should be a representative mix of all the teachers in A.I.U. schools.

    a. Considerations would include age, experience, school size, sex, subject specialty and grade level taught.

    b. The degree of a teacher's involvement in student activities and/or teacher organizations would be a primary factor in selection.

2. Students and teacher from the same district would not work together in the same group during the meetings so that each participant would be free to express his/her opinions and ideas in the most non-threatening environment possible.

3. Since guidance counselors hear both sides of all school problems, at least three would be included within the twenty teachers selected.

4. Additionally, it was decided to have a consultant in group dynamics spend an hour with the group at each meeting illustrating, through participation activities, some of the problems between teachers and students. Debriefing discussions would follow.

The Project

With great optimism and enthusiasm, the students threw themselves into the project. The principals endorsed the program and cooperated in helping to select the teachers to be nominated.

Forms were distributed on which the nominations were made (See Appendix B). Final selection was done in the I.U. offices to insure that a representative mix was obtained and letters of invitation from the Forum President were sent to selected teachers (See Appendix C).

Teachers and counselors were drawn from 20 different districts with each one bringing some unique characteristic to the group. Ten men and 10 women were selected, two from parochial schools and 18 from public ones. Their teaching experience ranged from 4 to 32 years, with an 18-year average. Their subject area specialties encompassed math, science, physical education. social studies, English, and guidance. Seven of them were from large schools, 9 from medium, and 4 from

small ones. The group had members active in union, student, and professional organizations. Some coached teams or school plays, some sponsored yearbooks, newspapers or clubs, others were advisors to the National Honor Society or Student Council. There were department chairmen, class sponsors, and one who was nominated for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. There were also some who, like most people, just go home after a day's work. There were a few who were turned off and tuned out.

Session I

Before any activities began, an attitude assessment, The Education Scale, was administered to both teachers and students to determine their stance in relation to traditional vs. progressive practices in education. (The same scale was administered again at the last session - See Appendix D for a copy).

Mrs. Bakin led the group in two activities in group processes. The first illustrated the misunderstanding that can arise from ambiguities in verbal communication. The second one dealt with non-verbal communication and the role of cooperation and sensitivity to the needs of others in completing group tasks. Not only did these activities accomplish their primary objectives, but they also drew the participants closer together. Teachers and students were able to relate to each other in a very relaxed and open way throughout the rest of the project.

As can be seen by the Session I Discussion Guide (See Appendix E), the small groups into which the participants were divided very quickly got down to some basic issues affecting teacher-student relationships. The outcomes of those discussions were reported by a recorder from each group at the end of the day.

Some of the most often mentioned factors found in a good teacher-student relationship were mutual respect, understanding, interest and trust. The need for a spirit of cooperation, academic preparedness by both parties, and clearly defined roles were also pointed out. Good communication skills, positive attitudes, variety in classroom procedures and fair rules, evenly administered, also seem essential.

Students want interesting, open-minded teachers, who care about them as people. They like to feel comfortable when asking questions, receive praise for good work, and to see unacceptable behavior dealt with. Teachers, on the other hand, want students who are willing to learn, are courteous and well mannered (towards teachers and other students), and do more than the minimum asked.

Some of the factors which seem to influence the relationship other than the participants are: differing socio-economic backgrounds, home problems, unions, class size, stereotyping, discipline codes, and the lack of parental interest in the schools.

Although this is not an exhaustive summary of the discussions, it should illustrate the seriousness of purpose the participants brought to their task. They felt they made a good start and were anxious to begin identifying ways to overcome some of the problems between teachers and students at the March meeting.

In preparation for that meeting, every teacher and student was asked to keep a log of:

a. Incidents where an attempt was made to improve teacher-student relationships on the part of a teacher, a student, a parent, an administrator, or a school policy ruling.

b. Behavior that seemed to result in good teacher-student relationships.

c. Similar information collected from at least three peers.

During an executive board meeting following the regular meeting, board members mentioned how often the guidance counselor's influence was brought up during the discussions. It was decided to request principals to send additional counselors to the next meeting to share their thinking and ideas. Five principals agreed to send a counselor to the March meeting.

Session II

After a group activity designed to illustrate stereotypical thinking, all 8 counselors conducted a panel discussion of some of the topics listed on the Session II Discussion Guide (See Appendix F). The most noteworthy idea on ways to improve the responsiveness of the guidance system mentioned by the panel was the sign-up sheet one school keeps available for students who are unable to see a counselor when they first go into the office. The student writes down the urgency of his problem and its nature (if he wishes). The counselor promises to get back to the student within 24 hours and does.

In the small group discussions, teachers and students agreed that it is important that parents feel more responsible for the learning atmosphere in schools. Some of the suggestions for parents included:

1) provide volunteer help when needed, but don't interfere in matters about which you have no direct knowledge.

2) put the pressure on students to behave and learn rather than on teachers to discipline and instruct.

3) promote trust between student and teachers, student and administrator, and teacher and parent.

Another discussion of interest was one concerning teachers working with students outside the parameters of the school day. Students, of course, wish to have teachers available to them for a longer time span; while teachers, quite naturally, do not think they should be expected to give up their own time without compensation just because teaching is their profession. Some suggestions made on this matter were:

1) Students whose interests coincide with the teacher's may be successful in persuading the teacher to sponsor an activity in that interest area.

2) By petitioning administrators and school boards, a policy might be developed to find released time for teachers to work with students to tutor, advise, or sponsor an activity.

3) Since many teachers have become disillusioned with students' behavior in extracurricular situations, students need to convince teachers that they understand and accept responsibility for their own actions and those of their peers.

A good teacher-student relationship was described as one where the teacher has a sense of humor; is unambiguous about what is expected from the student; is aware of what the student expects to get from class; is willing to listen; presents the subject matter in a clear, organized and interesting manner; is flexible; does not inhibit the student with sarcasm or dictatorial tactics; exhibits a sensitivity to the students' feelings and treats each one fairly and equally. The student in an ideal relationship is open, well prepared, able to adjust to differing teaching styles and personalities, is willing to participate, pays attention, treats both teachers and fellow students with courtesy, is self-disciplined, and does his part to create an atmosphere conductive to learning.

Some other factors which were pointed out as contributory to such a relationship are:

1) principals who get to know the student body by name and make it a point to compliment them on their work

2) organizations which include all facets of the school population in their membership

3) following the chain of command in settling grievances

4) using the counsellor as a mediator

5) school projects which create school spirit

6) parent visitation day in schools

7) early graduation policies

8) career resource centers

9) reasonable make-up policies following illness

10) uncrowded classrooms

11) work experience programs

12) Parent-Teacher-Student Associations

Session III

During the final session of the project, every participant (teacher, counselor and student) spent the first hour responding to the fourteen items found in Appendix G. Respondents were asked to draw upon ideas discussed in the first two sessions and on their own opinions and perceptions.

Each person then worked in one of the 14 groups assigned the task of summarizing all the responses to a single item. The results of this activity are the recommendations made on the following pages.

Recommendations

The project participants analyzed the role of every group which has impact on the teacher-student relationship and made suggestions on ways they could improve the educational climate. The A.I.U. Student Forum believes that if each group addressed attempted to institute these suggestions, the problems between teachers and students (and in schools generally) would be greatly reduced.

STUDENTS CAN, COULD AND SHOULD:

1. *Discuss problems with the teacher when they occur - not allow them to accumulate.*
2. *Go to class prepared to work - assignments done, needed materials at hand.*
3. *Pay attention to directions and follow them.*
4. *Listen in class.*
5. *Treat teachers with respect.*
6. *Try to be enthusiastic.*
7. *Appreciate a warm, caring teacher - never take advantage of him/her.*
8. *Realize learning demands work and effort.*
9. *Refrain from interrupting teacher or fellow students while they are talking.*
10. *Ask questions related to the topic at hand, hold others for after class.*
11. *Try not to be obnoxious on purpose.*
12. *Realize a teacher is a human being, with feelings just like theirs.*
13. *Help the teacher maintain classroom control.*
14. *Be mature enough to accept responsibility for their own learning, choices, and actions.*

15. *Talk to bothersome students about their behavior.*

16. *Give other people a chance, not be defensive or rude.*

17. *Refuse to let peer pressure evoke unacceptable behavior; encourage everyone to be his/her own person.*

18. *Obey school rules.*

19. *Cultivate a sense of humor.*

20. *Use peer pressure to promote exemplary behavior - keep disruptive students in line.*

21. *Try to imagine themselves in the teacher's place.*

22. *Exhibit good manners at all times - be courteous and tactful.*

23. *Treat a substitute teacher as one would a guest in one's home.*

24. *Never participate in the humiliation of another student or of a teacher.*

25. *Cooperate with faculty sponsors of activities.*

26. *Keep an open mind.*

27. *Remember that teachers have personal lives that can cause them to have a bad day once in a while too.*

28. *Help fellow students who are having more difficulty in a course than they are.*

29. *Make an effort to get along with teachers.*

30. *Greet teachers in the halls, talk to them outside of the classroom.*

31. *Let a teacher know when something he/she mentions is of particular interest.*

32. *Be active and positive rather than apathetic or negative.*

33. *Show teachers their efforts are appreciated.*

34. *Set a good example for other students to follow - do more than the bare minimum.*

35. *Accept the consequences of one's own actions.*

36. *Get involved in student government and/or other activities to develop school pride.*

37. *Do their part to improve their school - not expect George to do it.*

38. *Understand the teacher's role is to guide learning; student's to assimilate it.*

39. *Be tolerant of teachers' unique personalities and approaches to education.*

40. *Earn the teacher's respect.*

41. *Be friendly - smile.*

42. *Avoid trying to catch teachers in errors or to put them "on the spot".*

43. *Be honest.*

44. *Avoid being absent and be on time.*

45. *Care as much about their responsibilities as their rights.*

46. *Work through channels to bring about change.*

47. *Let teachers know, in a tactful way, if a classroom change needs to be made to facilitate learning or better relations.*

TEACHERS CAN, COULD AND SHOULD:

1. *Respect the student as being as human as they themselves are.*

2. *Make fairness a priority in structuring student activities and evaluations.*

3. *Develop a repertoire of instructional techniques to maintain student interest in learning.*

4. *Be consistent in their expectations.*

5. *Avoid "buddy-buddy" relationships with students, but be friendly.*

6. *Show concern for students who are not doing well and commend those who are.*

7. *Establish classroom rules and regulations at the beginning of the term.*

8. *Have a sense of humor.*

9. *Admit their mistakes.*

10. *Listen to the students' point of view and consider their suggestions.*

11. *Study and apply sound child development theory.*

12. *Allow learning to be fun.*

13. *Try not to be boring.*

14. *Get involved in student activities; spend more time with students outside of class.*

15. *Show an interest in students' lives; appreciate them as people.*

16. *Provide extra help for students who need it.*

17. *Take the time to understand students, their feelings, values, and problems.*

18. *Relate classroom work to students' lives.*

19. *Involve students in instructional planning.*

20. *Use audio-visual materials to "spice up" the curriculum.*

21. *Act as a counselor when needed or wanted by students.*

22. *Sponsor a club or activity.*

23. *Help students reach their potential and accomplish their goals.*

24. *Set aside time to give students help.*

25. *Find out what students base their beliefs on.*

26. *Not allow personality conflicts to get in the way of teaching, listening or grading.*

27. *Solicit participation from every class member not just "the brains".*

28. *Smile and say hello when they see a student outside of class.*

29. *Never be too preoccupied to answer a student's question or greeting.*

30. *Hold individual student conferences.*

31. *Be sincere, patient, and not overly critical.*

32. *Encourage student evaluation of their teaching practices.*

33. *Consider some segment of their after school time as belonging to the student.*

34. *Give students a chance to succeed, never set someone up for failure.*

35. *Permit papers to be rewritten; tests to be rescheduled, etc. when genuine misunderstandings occur.*

36. *Avoid humiliating a student even in jest.*

37. *Impart a positive attitude; be proud of their profession.*

38. *Set up a firm discipline code and enforce it.*

39. *Build up students' feelings of self-worth through compliments, achievement awards, congratulations, etc.*

40. *Give students more responsibility.*

41. *Share experiences with students.*

42. *Always come to class well prepared to teach.*

43. *Make students feel comfortable in asking questions.*

44. *Be creative and innovative.*

45. *Stay "in tune" with the times.*

46. *Develop fresh plans each year instead of doing everything the same.*

47. *Learn students' names quickly.*

48. *Investigate underlying causes of conflict or resentment.*

49. *Refrain from taking themselves too seriously.*

50. *Grade and return tests and projects promptly.*

51. *Clearly explain procedures.*

52. *Be compassionate when a student is in a difficult position.*

53. *Recognize each person's potential, limitations, and individuality and provide for these in teaching.*

54. *Feel responsible for establishing an atmosphere conducive to learning.*

55. *Command respect by earning it.*

56. *Help a student in need; do not act as a judge (cases of drugs, pregnancy, etc.)*

57. *Try to get to know students they do not have in class.*

GUIDANCE COUNSELORS CAN, COULD AND SHOULD:

1. *Be readily available to anyone who needs them.*
2. *Bring students and teachers together who are having problems relating to each other.*
3. *Make it easier for troubled students to see them.*
4. *Help train teachers to become better counselors themselves.*
5. *Accept some of the responsibility for good teacher-student relations.*
6. *Act as an impartial mediator and liaison between groups.*
7. *Plan meeting where teachers and/or students can openly discuss problem situations.*
8. *Present the "other guy's side" in teacher-student dilemmas.*
9. *Be a super listener.*
10. *Suggest alternative solutions to problems.*
11. *Properly discern people's need - whether for a friend, career counselling or college guidance.*
12. *Provide service to <u>all</u> students, not just college bound.*
13. *Be an advocate of the student.*
14. *Respect confidentiality.*
15. *Be honest, objective, open, ethical, friendly and sincere.*
16. *Be sensitive to problems associated with age groups, peer pressure, group acceptance, changes in school environment, family background, self-concept, personal goals, interests, etc. that can cause school problems.*
17. *Help students and/or teachers develop plans of action.*
18. *Provide a comfortable, non-threatening atmosphere in which to work on problems.*
19. *Aid students in developing self confidence.*
20. *Follow through on referrals and problems.*
21. *Become actively involved in all phases of school life.*

22. *Make it obvious their primary concern is people, not paperwork.*

23. *Be diplomatic and effective communicators.*

24. *Exhibit warmth and understanding.*

25. *Know every student they are assigned.*

26. *Help students recognize their own strengths and weaknesses.*

27. *Care deeply about young people and impart this sense of caring to them.*

28. *Bring problem causing situations to the attention of whoever can effect a solution.*

29. *Publicize guidance and counseling services provided.*

30. *Encourage students to schedule courses they can be successful in, eliminating some causes of disruption.*

ADMINISTRATORS CAN, COULD AND SHOULD:

1. *Make sure all personnel are well qualified to do their assigned job.*

2. *Be more selective in hiring practices.*

3. *Establish informal discussion groups with teachers and students.*

4. *Act as an unbiased mediator in teacher-student conflicts.*

5. *Allow students and teachers to help in the curriculum selection process and in project planning.*

6. *Know the needs of students and teachers and try to provide for them.*

7. *Set up a student advisory board and a teacher advisory board.*

8. *Be receptive to new ideas.*

9. *Develop a positive image of the school, teachers, and students.*

10. *Fix things that are wrong.*

11. *Get to know students on individual basis as much as possible.*

12. *Show compassion for, and understanding of, teacher and student problems.*

13. *Become more involved in student activities.*

14. *Be available to listen to problems and complaints.*

15. *Keep an open mind.*

16. *Make sure teachers don't over- or underestimate the abilities of their students.*

17. *Structure school activities that will involve teacher and students together.*

18. *Establish open lines of communications between students and teachers.*

19. *Compliment teachers and students who deserve it.*

20. *Get out of the office and into the halls and classrooms.*

21. *Make frequent classroom visits, not once a year evaluations, to get a feel for what goes on every day.*

22. *Spend time on problems other than discipline.*

23. *Explain reasons for rejecting student ideas and suggestions.*

24. *Schedule activity periods.*

25. *Make it a point to attend all school functions.*

26. *Encourage staff; show them good teaching is appreciated and valued.*

27. *Be open about actions and procedures provided for in school policy.*

28. *Solicit the views and ideas of teachers and students on problems and issues.*

29. *Try to improve the principal-student and principal-teacher relationships.*

30. *Establish reasonable, clearly understood, rules and regulations for both teachers and students and then enforce them.*

31. *Give teachers more freedom to structure their own courses.*

32. *Don't talk down to students.*

33. *Provide opportunities for kids to "blow off steam".*

34. *Be proud of the district schools, faculty and students; make others proud.*

35. *Be enthusiastic, fair, consistent, and friendly.*

36. *Dare to be innovative.*

37. *Avoid pre-judging people and situations; wait until all the facts are known.*

38. *Try to establish a relaxed school atmosphere which would encourage student-teacher interaction.*

39. *Solicit faculty support for school policy.*

40. *Seek compromise rather than discord.*

41. *Never permit students to be disrespectful.*

42. *Be receptive to constructive criticism.*

43. *Provide an orderly environment conducive to learning.*

44. *Give teachers more support and latitude in dealing with discipline problems.*

PARENTS, CAN, COULD, AND SHOULD:

1. *Realize their attitudes are reflected in their children's behavior.*

2. *Get to know their children's teachers to establish rapport before a problem arises.*

3. *Investigate both sides of a question; not base judgment solely on a child's version of the story.*

4. *Teach children to respect adults.*

5. *Remember the <u>teacher</u> is not always the one at fault.*

6. *Use the chain of command in the school system - teacher, principal, superintendent, board when dealing with a problem.*

7. *View teachers with respect, not as inferiors.*

8. *Refrain from judging all teachers on the basis of the actions of a few.*

9. *Avoid making negative comments about the school and/or teachers.*

10. *Let students work out their own problems whenever possible.*

11. *Stop making excuses for kids.*

12. *Encourage students to assume the responsiblity for their own actions.*

13. *Find time, even if they work, to become involved in school activities.*

14. *Make sure their children do their assignments and are prepared for class.*

15. *Remember the frustrations one can experience with 2 or 3 children at home is compounded tenfold in the schoolroom.*

16. *Seek help in handling particularly difficult children.*

17. *Not rely on the school to "straighten out" problem children.*

18. *Show children education is to be valued.*

19. *Elect responsible, honorable people to the school board.*

20. *Not abrogate their parental responsibilities to the school.*

21. *Keep the school informed of factors that may influence a child's performance (illness, family problems, etc.)*

22. *Instill children with good manners, values, and morals.*

23. *Visit the school often; join an organization that works to improve it.*

24. *Be disciplinarians; command respect themselves.*

25. *Get to know their child as he/she really is.*

26. *Let the teacher or school know when they think something has been done well.*

27. *Listen to their children; provide a non-threatening atmosphere where children can talk over their problems.*

28. *Set reasonable goals for their children.*

29. *Not be an aggravation to the school; be supportive.*

30. *Urge their children to seek help from school resources when necessary - counselor, principal, librarian, secretary, etc.*

STUDENT COUNCILS CAN, COULD AND SHOULD:

1. *Sponsor more teacher-student activities that will allow them to get to know each other on a more personal level.*

2. *Create a school suggestion box, and disseminate information both ways.*

3. *Establish a regular, informal discussion program between teachers and students to improve communications.*

4. *Solicit teacher and student involvement in all school activities.*

5. *Insist council members be elected on merit, not personality.*

6. *Initiate a tutoring program.*

7. *Develop a program to foster school spirit and pride.*

8. *Plan opportunities for parent-student-teacher conferences.*

9. *Help to institute the Student Forum model for improving relations in schools.*

10. *Work as a body to solve school problems.*

11. *Act as a mediation panel and make recommendations in disputes and conflicts.*

12. *Open some of their meetings to interested observers (teachers, students) and allow them to express their ideas; stagger meeting times to broaden participation.*

13. *Establish an ad hoc committee of teachers and students where issues can be aired and solutions sought.*

14. *Institute a reporting system that will let all students and teachers know what happens in both Student Council and Student Forum meetings.*

15. *Build esprit de corps by holding homeroom competitions.*

16. *Publicize both sides of issues.*

17. *Establish their own credibility by working on worthwhile, relevant projects in a responsible way.*

18. *Invite teachers to elect a representative to sit in on S. C. meetings.*

19. *Create an open atmosphere all parties will find inviting and conducive to problem solving.*

SCHOOL BOARDS CAN, COULD, AND SHOULD:

1. *Include a student and a teacher as non-voting members of the board.*

2. *Solicit the opinions of students and teachers on problems and issues.*

3. *Pay more attention to what actually goes on in classrooms.*

4. *Visit the schools, let students and teachers get to know them.*

5. *Sit in on student council and faculty meetings to find out their concerns.*

6. *Discuss important issues with students that affect them directly.*

7. *Know what impact a board policy can be expected to have on the school.*

8. *Poll students and teachers on financial matters which vitally affect them before arriving at decisions.*

9. *Reward achievement routinely through established procedure.*

10. *Value academics above sports.*

11. *Get to know the staff as people.*

12. *Be straightforward about advocated policies instead of allowing them to "leak out".*

13. *Provide funds for more field trips, clubs, assemblies, and other activities.*

14. *Observe behavior in assemblies, cafeterias, rest rooms, hallways, etc. to really know the school.*

15. *Be supportive of teachers to improve their morale.*

16. *Keep an open mind.*

17. *Hire well-qualified people who will involve themselves with students.*

18. *Work to develop community interest in the accomplishments of students and teachers.*

19. *Repair physical plants before they become shoddy.*

20. *Refrain from over-dramatizing disputes with teacher unions.*

21. *Become more interested in student rights.*

22. *Put student benefit before financial considerations when formulating policy.*

23. *Deny concessions to parents in situations with which they are not fully conversant.*

24. *Create lighter class loads.*

25. *Realize that all students are not college bound.*

26. *Share news of their activities through a public newsletter.*

27. *Be objective and not allow personalities to become an issue.*

28. *Cooperate with other organizations and groups to improve the educational climate.*

29. *Be sensitive to the needs and values of both groups.*

30. *Carefully review and evaluate existing programs.*

31. *Encourage better teaching through merit raises, extra pay, or some form of recognition.*

32. *Stand firm against political pressure; decide what's best for kids.*

33. *Include participation in student activities as a condition of employment.*

An Analysis of the Impact of Concerned Groups

The data accumulated by this project is truly overwhelming. Some of it (see question 14, Appendix G) will have to be put aside until next year if we are to deal with it in a meaningful way. Asking participants to react to the various items listed in Appendix G was like opening the flood gates. Almost without exception, the task was viewed as important and the comments elicited were thoughtful and reflective.

Participating students were particularly hard on themselves and their fellow students in assessing their responsibility for bringing about good teacher-student relations. They found the project promoted some "soul searching", but they still managed to label the experience very worthwhile.

They concluded the key to the whole process is mutual respect - with it, everything works - without it, it doesn't seem to matter what else is there, the relationship is not a good one. Mutual respect precludes teacher sarcasm and student disruption. It demands each side come to class prepared for learning. It acknowledges the humanness of both teachers and students, yet distinguishes between their roles. The classroom becomes a place of serious purpose conducted in an atmosphere of trust.

The teacher's role evoked more comment than any other segment of the report. Both teachers and students see it as the crucial element in school relationships. Hardly a student failed to comment on the need for teachers to be involved in student activities. It was far and away the most frequent comment (plea). The feeling is that in order for teachers and students to really know each other and build a rapport, they need to meet outside the classroom.

Students seem to almost hunger for teachers who will relate to them humanistically: "Show they care for students by - a comment of a complimentary nature - notice little things, such as a new hairdo or dress - an accomplishment or an award." They want to see their teacher at extra curricular activities because it, again "shows they care"; "are interested in what their students do"; "gives evidence of their support"; etc. They, nevertheless, want the teacher to be an adult, worthy of respect; one who will maintain order, let students know what's expected of them and be fair and consistent in their practices.

The Guidance Counselor's role, on the other hand, evoked the most criticism. Even though some understanding of the broad and time-consuming responsibilities

placed upon counselors was evident, a deep and pervasive dissatisfaction with school counseling was loudly raised. The problem seems to be one of conflicting expectations by administrators, teachers, students and counselors themselves. Administrators are concerned with testing and scheduling problems; teachers need help in dealing with problem students; students want a sympathetic, caring, interested, omnipotent problem solver; and counselors themselves want to be loved by all while performing a reasonable workload. The dilemma is not an easy one to resolve.

More counselors are needed; but only if they can focus on the particular, rather than the general needs of students and teachers. Merely increasing the number of counselors will not have an appreciable impact on teacher-student relations. It is doubtful, however, that schools will ever allot the resources needed to hire enough guidance people to make the kind of difference teachers and students want.

In discussing administrators, the project participants charged them with setting the tone of a school. The tone, in turn, has great influence on the general relationships between people in a building. For example, an autocratic, tense administrator is likely to foster tense teachers and sullen students, while an open, innovative administrator is seen as promoting inventive teaching and turned-on kids.

As a first step in the improvement of relations between students and teachers, administrators were urged to be both visible and available. In this way, they can establish themselves as liaisons between the two groups and as interested leaders in the improvement of the communications process.

The administrator, above all, must deal with the lack of respect in schools - as it affects teachers, students and property. Everyone is very concerned about rampant disrespect, but principals and superintendents were singled out as being primarily responsible for eliminating it. The re-institution of strong discipline codes was widely advocated by students and teachers alike as an essential move in that direction.

While administrators are expected to enforce respectful attitudes in schools, parents are charged with instilling proper values in children in the first place. The group almost unanimously agreed that it is the parents' responsibility to teach respect, honesty, good manners, a love of learning, personal responsibility and other basic values to their children. Almost no one saw these tasks as the school's real function. The fact that schools have begun to develop programs to change attitudes is seen as a failure on the part of families to effectively instruct children before they go to school, and to oversee their moral development generally.

Student councils are viewed primarily as possible facilitators of interaction between students and teachers. On the other hand, both students and teachers seem well aware of the power of school boards to control the school environment. Boards were admonished to be more integrally involved in the day-to-day functioning of the school and to depend more on their "clients" for counsel in determining the most effective allocation of resources.

Participants did not have too many expectations of professional organizations. Their ability to deal with global matters was seen as their strength. Journal articles, model development workshops, organization meetings, and legislative lobbying were mentioned as worthwhile contributions they can make. Many suggested that teacher unions work to upgrade their own membership by advocating stricter standards for entering (and remaining in) the teaching profession.

The impact of community groups on the school environment was regarded as minimal with the possible exception of the P.T.A. To be truly effective, however, it was suggested the P.T.A.s become P.T.S.A.s. Peripherally, community groups can sponsor activities in which both teachers and students will participate, provide resource people to the classroom (particularly for career education), and establish neighborhood recreational areas.

These groups' support of schools was viewed as a way of lessening misunderstanding and promoting cooperation, but not as a vital component in improving teachers' and students' relationships with one another. To make real progress in that direction, the two groups themselves will have to assume the major responsibility.

Policies and Programs That Seem To Make A Difference

Each of the policies or programs described below already exist in at least one school district in Allegheny County. Teachers and students from those districts think they have fostered better teacher-student relationships. They are listed here as examples of things worth trying by a district attempting to bring about improvement.

1. Monthly meetings are held where students, teachers, and administrators can meet.

2. Workshops are conducted on effective teaching, motivating students and creating good class "climates".

3. An open door policy is in effect for administrators, counselors and teachers.

4. Suggestion boxes are used to collect gripes and ideas.

5. Students are encouraged to go to an uninvolved "third party" to discuss teacher-student conflicts (a guidance counselor, for example).

6. Teachers' schedules have time built in to meet with students to help them with either academic or personal problems.

7. Many new schools have incorporated conference rooms into their plans, so that teachers and students have a place where they can talk together "in an atmosphere of dignity and privacy".

8. A teacher-student relations board has been created in which every participant has an equal voice and open discussions are held.

9. Teachers on "lunch watch" and in study halls provide students with a chance to talk without infringing on teachers' class or private time.

10. Student governments make teachers and administrators aware of the issues students are concerned about.

11. Many guidance counselors act as mediators between teachers and students to resolve problems.

12. Active P.T.S.A.s are a forum for brainstorming mutual problems.

13. Some student councils sponsor activities which involve both groups.

14. Organizations and activities such as "Principal/Student Advisory Council", "Faculty Advisory Committee", and "Faculty/Student Breakfast" promote needed interaction.

15. Non-voting membership of students on school boards keeps many small problems from becoming big ones.

16. Using students on curriculum and program planning committees eliminates some of the dissatisfaction with course offerings.

17. Closer teacher-student relations are fostered by small classes and elective courses.

18. Teachers who will tutor students during their preparation periods, allow students to make up tests, and/or help them catch up after an absence are appreciated.

19. Uniform school curriculum and grading standards remove some causes of student dissatisfaction with teacher assignments.

20. The institution of tutoring programs increases the student's feeling that the school cares about his/her academic needs.

21. Some teachers involve students in course development and welcome student evaluation of their teaching, allowing the student to have input into classroom procedure.

22. Orientation programs for students new to a building helps them feel comfortable.

23. Extra curricular activities, including sports, involve teachers and students on a level different from the classroom; lets them get to know each other better.

24. Organizations such as A.I.U. Student Forum and Pennsylvania Youth Education Association devote time to supporting educational practices and programs.

Policies and Programs That Might Make A Difference

In addition to the ideas enumerated in the previous section, participants suggested some additional things that should be tried. Although they are untested, the following recommendations are not made lightly. They were put forth near the end of 3 months of concentrated thinking and discussions of teacher-student relationships.

1. Consult students about curriculum. Their ideas for new courses and their evaluations of existing ones might help to eliminate some causes of disinterest and disruption.

2. Clear, fair, enforced discipline codes would make students aware of the consequences of certain behavior and encourage them to accept responsibility for their actions.

3. Establish an "assistance room" manned by teachers of required subjects who would provide aid to students having difficulty with assignments. Teachers could be rotated in any manner deemed reasonable. The concept could include honor students in a tutoring capacity.

4. Have school-wide projects in which a teacher and a student co-chair. Teams with both teacher and student members could work for a common goal and develop camaraderie.

5. Set aside smoking areas and have them used by both teachers and students.

6. Provide, in-school time, for teacher-student conferences. Conferences should not be limited to talking over grades, but could be used to evaluate a course, clear up a misunderstanding, or plan new work.

7. Institute student evaluation of teachers. Evaluations could be the sole property of the teacher, but would provide him/her with constructive information on his/her teaching strengths and weaknesses that could not be obtained in any other way.

8. Require every teacher to sponsor a club activity or program that is not part of his/her teaching assignment as a condition of employment.

9. Use weighted grading for honor courses to eliminate a source of dissension.

10. Implement as many suggestions made in this report as possible.

11. Give as much recognition to achievement in academic areas as to sports to elevate the image of scholarship.

12. Lobby in the state legislature for smaller schools and classes to promote individualization and humanization of schools.

13. Investigate general student complaints (They are probably well founded.).

14. Develop district-wide grading and administrative policies to avoid ambiguity and lack of uniformity.

15. Structure curricula and school programs according to vital physical, intellectual or social needs of students not because they are pleasurable or fun.

16. Involve parents in schools by regularly sending home bulletins explaining new programs and policies to enlist their aid and support.

17. Make provisions for teachers and students to file grievances without fear of repercussions so that real problems can be brought into the open and solutions sought.

Dissemination and Implementation

The work done by this Student Forum in trying to identify ways of improving the relationship between teachers and students has been very enlightening to those who participated in it. The project's goals, however, were, and are, much larger ones. We hope to involve most of the teachers and students in Allegheny County in a concerted effort to bring about improvement. In the following paragraphs are outlined some ideas of how that task might be accomplished.

Respondents feel that the biggest part of the burden of dissemination (after the initial distribution of this report) will fall to the teachers, and guidance counselors who were part of the project. The reason for this is that about half the Forum members will graduate in June and the other half, next June. Almost everyone agrees that to be successful a concentrated campaign will have to be conducted over a long period of time (three years perhaps). Nevertheless, there is much that can begin right now, starting with creation of plans for implementation in the fall, that will involve all participants.

Suggestions on ways to implement the ideas developed throughout the project are as follows:

- The A.I.U. Student Forum should attempt to interest local T.V. stations and newspapers in doing a story on our work this year to garner support for the concept.

- Districts should enlist the aid of community newspapers in making the citizenry aware of our findings and suggestions.

- This report should (and will be) sent to every participant, high school principal, superintendent, student council, district teachers' organization, and school board in the county, so that each may see the influence they can (and do) have on the situation.

- Project participants should offer to assume the leadership to develop programs in their home districts. For example:

a. Plan an assembly (might simulate Student Forum activities).

b. Speak at faculty, student council, P.T.A., and school board meetings to explain the project and enlist these groups' aid in implementing a district plan.

c. Form a committee of students and teachers (chosen to reflect every facet of the school population in proportion to their numbers) to plan implementation activities.

d. Structure an in-service program for teachers (involve them in a simulation of one of our discussion groups).

e. Survey the teachers and students in their schools to identify the most specific and pressing problems, then develop a discussion and planning program to help resolve them. Discussions could take place in social studies class, during activities period, after school, or in any framework that would accommodate those involved. Disseminate the results of these discussions widely.

f. School newspaper editor or reporter could condense this report and publish the summary, thereby disseminating the information it contains to the entire school population.

g. Schools could begin their own Student Forum and replicate this project.

h. The school administration and/or the school boards aid and support should be sought for whatever avenue of implementation is pursued.

i. Once a format is established, the students in the secondary school should explain and demonstrate the process and product to younger children in the district before interest in the program dies (as it always seems to do eventually). Some participants felt that senior high was too late to effect much change in attitudes.

j. Establish permanent committees of teachers/students who will deal with conflict situations and discuss problems.

k. A specific time for planned activities should be determined, such as - in-service program at the beginning of the school year and monthly student council programs devoted to this issue. At each meeting change the group membership (except for the leaders) to involve the greatest number of teachers and students totally.

Student Forum could continue the project next year, making dissemination and implementation of the model their focus.

a. Plan a movie or video tape which could be circulated among the districts and would depict a typical discussion which took place this year. It could be used wherever deemed appropriate in the districts - a class,

assembly, special small groups, etc. (Funding would have to be obtained, proposal written, etc.)

b. Forum teams to visit school to do live reenactments of the processes we went through this year. (Teacher participants could be recruited from the hosting school.) Might consider doing this on a regional basis and inviting representatives from surrounding area schools to attend.

c. Student Forum wire service could distribute a story with the highlights of this report, which could be published in school newspapers to reach the widest audience of students and teachers.

d. Information packets could be put together for student councils (a "how to" kit) and distributed to all schools so they could each have their own project.

e. Forum teams to make presentations to administrators, faculty (in-service), and other concerned groups to help them start a movement locally.

The expertise of the teacher participants should be tapped as extensively as possible. They could present to the P.T.A., faculty, administration, and/or school board to solicit support and funding. Students should present to student councils, student clubs, and youth organizations.

Some cautions were noted in respondents' comments that should be heeded if our work is to be well received and used.

a. Whatever is done should be interesting and motivational.

b. Every project should be thoroughly planned.

c. Participants should have time to ask questions and make comments (be actively involved).

d. If no feedback is required from school about their successes or failures with their treatment of the issue, others will not be able to learn from their experience.

Project Evaluation Data

In addition to the enthusiasm of the participants and the positive comments they made during the project, the results of the Education Scale, (Appendix D), administered pre and post, were tabulated. The scale, as mentioned previously, assessed the position of participants on a continuum spanning the distance from traditionalism to progressivism.

Since only two counselors took the pre- and post-test, their scores were included with the teachers and the composite considered faculty scores. As a whole, they (the faculty) moved toward the progressive end of the scale during the time

frame of the project. The students did also, but not to the extent the teachers did. Table I compares pre- and post-scores for faculty, for students, and with each other.

TABLE I

	Faculty		Students	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Agreed with traditional items	5	5	8	8
Disagreed with traditional items	0	0	0	0
Agreed with progressive items	8	10	7	8
Disagreed with progressive items	0	0	0	1
Neutral items	7	3	5	3

Note: Agreement is denoted by $\pm$.6 or more.

It is interesting to note that students could more readily be classified conservative than could teachers.

Table II is a compilation of the mean raw scores, pre and post, by item, and by group. In addition, it shows the movement along the continuum from pre-test to post-test. Directional move is only noted in the table where it was deemed significant.

Disagreement between faculty and students is most marked on Item 5 (Disagreement is defined as a difference of $\pm$.6 in post-test raw score mean). Teachers agreed with the item on academic freedom, but students rejected the idea that teachers should be free to teach what they think is right and best. Other disparities (Items 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, and 17) seem to indicate students think schools should concentrate on subject matter (basics) and stop trying to appeal to interests - "just get the job done". Teachers, however, are more humanistic, "whole child" oriented, in their outlook. The difference found on Item 13 may point to teachers' need for structure or sequence and/or students' acceptance of mini-courses.

The scale data would seem to indicate that the project may have helped to create a little more openness in both teachers and students attitudes. The true measure of the project's impact, however, is to be found in the idealism and harmony fostered by the small group discussion. There, student sat with teacher to work on a problem common to them both, in an atmosphere of complete respect for one another's views.

TABLE II

MEAN ITEM RESPONSES

	Faculty			Students		
Items	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Move Direction	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Move Direction
1	2.3	2.3		1.5	1.6	
2	1.6	1.1		.4	.9	P
3	.4	-.3	P	.5	.4	
4	.5	-.4	P	0	.1	
5	.7	1.3	P	-.4	-.6	
6	1.0	.4	P	1.1	1.1	
7	1.9	2.0		1.3	1.9	P
8	1.4	1.6		1.8	1.7	
9	1.7	1.7		1.5	1.5	
10	1.5	.8	P	1.4	1.5	
11	1.3	.9		1.9	1.7	
12	-.3	.5	C	.6	.7	
13	1.0	1.3		.7	.6	
14	1.7	1.0	P	1.0	.8	
15	1.8	1.8		1.5	2.0	P
16	1.1	1.0		.5	.6	
17	.5	.9		.6	.3	
18	.4	.5		.6	.6	
19	.3	1.5	C	1.6	1.4	
20	2.1	2.3		2.1	1.8	

Note: Items with which agreement indicates a progressive outlook on education - 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, and 20.
Items with which agreement indicates a traditional outlook on education - 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, and 19.

Further speculation on the meaning of these scores does not seem warranted. The project only lasted 60 days, and the number of faculty participants was too small to generalize from with any confidence.

Summary Statement

Our thanks to the Henry C. Frick Educational Commission for providing the funds to carry out this project. It was a very rewarding and exciting experience. We know that even if nothing else were ever done with the information in this report, that the project has had a profound influence on the thinking and understanding of all those who were a part of it. Participating teachers and students developed a genuine empathy for each other's frustrations, limitations and objectives. They will never again enter a classroom with quite the same attitudes as they previously held.

We urge those who read this report to join with us in our effort to change school through improving the ways in which teachers and students relate to each other. There are suggestions here for every segment of society. It is not a task which teachers and students can accomplish alone.

IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

One of the most important outcomes of the Leadership Training Workshop for Students held at Indiana, Pennsylvania on August 9, 10, and 11, 1977 was the identification of poor teacher-student relationships as the main causal factor of most school problems. The workshop, funded by a grant from the Henry Clay Frick Educational Commission, encouraged free discussion of group dynamics as they relate to both leadership situations and school problems. Over and over, comments were made about the inability of students to reach teachers, to discuss problems, to receive academic aid, or to have teachers participate in student-related activities. Student disillusionment with teachers was very evident.

On the other hand, teacher disillusionment with students has been well documented by the news media, in books, and in teacher contracts. The situation as it now exists is one of apathetic teachers having to deal with apathetic students who have to deal with apathetic teachers, etc. The result -- vandalism, disrespect, poor discipline, lack of pride in school and community, loss of love of learning, low academic achievement, job dissatisfaction, few school activities, and a general disintegration of the learning environment for both teachers and students.

This proposal intends to provide a vehicle for teacher-student interaction which may lead to positive changes in these factors in the school environment. The project will be coordinated by Marion Karl, the Student Forum Advisor at Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

The Allegheny Intermediate Unit is an educational service agency which assists the 46 county school districts in Allegheny County. Through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, local school systems have access to programs and help which they cannot easily or economically provide for themselves. One of the services of the AIU is the sponsorship of the Student Forum, a group consisting of one senior and one junior from each of the high schools in Allegheny County served by the I.U.

(approximately 110 students). The purpose of the Student Forum is to research, discuss, and propose solutions to educational problems which are of concern to students. Since students have determined that deteriorating teacher-student relationships are a primary problem in schools, this proposal, which will attempt to develop a model to bring about improvements in such relationships, is being submitted for consideration and funding.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are proposed:

1. To develop a model to improve teacher-student relationships.
2. To sensitize students to the ideas and feelings of teachers regarding the teacher-student relationship.
3. To sensitize teachers to the ideas and feelings of students regarding the teacher-student relationship.
4. To provide a non-threatening environment in which students and teachers may interact openly and honestly.
5. To promote dissemination of the outcomes of the program.

ACTIVITIES

The members of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Student Forum would like to begin to tackle the problem of teacher-student relationships during the 1977-78 school year by relating all Forum activities to the theme, "Improving Teacher-Student Relationships". In order to achieve any change in the present situation, students realize they must have teacher cooperation and honest, non-threatening student-teacher dialogue. The Forum seems an ideal setting for that dialogue to take place. Students from one school can interact with teachers from another school, where neither needs to be concerned with the repercussions that could ensue if such meetings took place between teachers and students of the same school.

The major goal of the Forum program would be to develop a model for improving teacher-student relationships that could be instituted in every district in the

county. Although a delivery system for the implementation of the model would be an important consideration in the developmental process, we do not envision accomplishing that task with these funds. If a viable model can be constructed, additional funds would be needed to move it into the schools. Districts might be willing to subsidize the program or another grant could be sought.

For this program, we propose to bring 20 teachers in to three of the Student Forum meetings. We will look for representation from teachers with various levels of interest in student problems and activities. The meetings with teachers will begin in December or January. This will give Forum members time to properly plan their work with the teachers during the October and November meetings.

A psychologist with expertise in group dynamics will be used for an hour of each of the teacher-student sessions to illustrate some of the problems between the two groups. He or she will conduct participatory activities followed by debriefing discussions which will set the tone for the day's work.

Students are optimistic. They believe change is possible and they are willing to work to bring it about. For the last few years, they have focused some of their attention on teacher tenure, unionism, student apathy, school pride and the like, but this is the first time they have given recognition to the two-sidedness of the problem. They understand that neither teachers nor students can hope to alleviate the ills of schools alone. It must be a cooperative effort.

Because of the financial straits schools find themselves in today, it is almost impossible for them to release teachers for non-academic pursuits, no matter how worthy. With a grant that would pay substitute salaries for participating teachers, such a project could be instituted.

EVALUATION

The proposed program is one of model development. Therefore, it doesn't lend itself to the usually objective forms of evaluation.

The main criteria of success will be the production of an actual model which can be disseminated and implemented in the 46 school districts served by the AIU. Although this will be the primary objective of the project, it could be that a model which will find acceptance in all schools cannot be constructed, but it is a task worth attempting.

At the very minimum, the project should bring about positive attitudinal changes in both teacher and student participants. An evaluation instrument, either selected or constructed by the project coordinator, will be administered pre and post to each group to determine such change.

The results will be analyzed by the project coordinator to determine the effect of this first attempt at improving student-teacher interactions. If results are promising, the project may be expanded to disseminate a model of student-teacher interaction that can be replicated in the schools in Allegheny County.

IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONS PROJECT

TEACHER PARTICIPANT NOMINATION FORM

1. School_____

2. Teacher's Name_____

3. Teacher's Sex_____

4. Years of Teaching Experience_____

   Extra curricular experience (last 3 years), club sponsorship, coaching duties, union activities, professional membership, etc.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

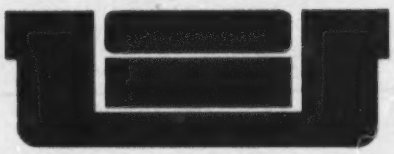
5. Teaching assignment

   Grade level_____

   Subject area_____

Appendix C

ALLEGHENY INTERMEDIATE UNIT



Suite 1300 · Two Allegheny Center · Pittsburgh, PA 15212
(Area Code 412) 323-5757

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Allegheny Intermediate Student Forum is an organization consisting of one junior and one senior from each high school in Allegheny County. Its purpose is to bring students together on a monthly basis to work on educational issues which concern them and to permit them to make recommendations to school administrators on solutions to school problems.

This year the Forum has chosen, "Improving Teacher-Student Relationships" as their main topic of concern. They have applied for, and been awarded, a grant to carry out the enclosed proposal. The money will be used to pay substitutes' salaries for the teachers invited to work with the Forum members in developing a model to improve teachers' and students' relationships with each other.

The principal and Student Forum members from your school have proposed your name as one who would be a valuable member of the teachers' team. We asked them to choose a person who is articulate, who can speak for a particular viewpoint, who will be open and honest about his/her feelings, and who will take the task before us seriously.

We, in turn, have screened the nominees and chosen eighteen teachers and three guidance counsellors to participate in this project. We have tried for the most representative mix possible. We have made our selection so that we will have both new and experienced teachers, men and women; different subject and grade level teaching assignments; various degrees of involvement in extra curricular activities, etc. It is hoped that the teacher group can, therefore, speak for the teaching profession, just as our Forum members speak for students.

Your involvement would entail attendance at three Student Forum meetings to be held February 14, March 14 and April 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The

meetings will take place at the AIU Resource Center, Lobby Level, Building Two, Allegheny Center. In addition to sharing your own views, perceptions and experiences, you will be asked to discuss the topic with your colleagues in your building and to bring their comments to the attention of the group.

It is anticipated that the first meeting will be spent identifying sources and consequences of conflict between teachers and students. The second meeting will be concerned with solutions to the problems, while the third will be devoted to the actual drafting of a model for improving teacher-student relations.

We hope, after reading the proposal, you find this project one with which you would like to work. Please accept our invitation to join us in doing something which we think could make a difference for all of us.

If you agree to participate in this program, please fill out the form below and return it by Monday, January 23, 1978 to:

Mrs. Marion C. Karl
Student Forum Advisor
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Two Allegheny Center - Suite 1300
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15212

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

THE STUDENT FORUM

Karen Trice

Karen Trice, President

KT:rsc
Enclosure

I, _____, teacher at_____

_____School, accept the invitation of Student Forum to participate in their project to improve teacher-student relationships. I can be present at all three of the meetings - February 14, March 14, and April 11.

Approved by: _____
Principal's Name

EDUCATION SCALE - A Appendix D

Check one:

_____Student _____Teacher _____Counselor

Instructions: Given below are 20 statements on educational ideas and problems about which we all have beliefs, opinions, and attitudes. We all think differently about such matters, and this scale is an attempt to let you express your beliefs and opinions. Respond to each of the items as follows:

Agree Very Strongly:	+3	Disagree Very Strongly:	-3
Agree Strongly:	+2	Disagree Strongly:	-2
Agree:	+1	Disagree:	-1

For example, if you agree very strongly with a statement, you would write +3 on the short line preceding the statement, but if you should happen to disagree with it, you would put -1 in front of it.

_____ 1 The goals of education should be dictated by children's interests and needs, as well as by the larger demands of society.

_____ 2 No subject is more important than the personalities of the pupils.

_____ 3 Schools of today are neglecting the three R's.

_____ 4 The pupil-teacher relationship is the relationship between a child who needs direction, guidance, and control and a teacher who is an expert supplying direction, guidance, and control.

_____ 5 Teachers, like university professors, should have academic freedom--freedom to teach what they think is right and best.

_____ 6 The backbone of the school curriculum is subject matter; activities are useful mainly to facilitate the learning of subject matter.

_____ 7 Teachers should encourage pupils to study and criticize our own and other economic systems and practices.

_____ 8 The traditional moral standards of our children should not just be accepted; they should be examined and tested in solving the present problem of students.

_____ 9 Learning is experimental; the child should be taught to test alternatives before accepting any of them.

_____ 10 The curriculum consists of subject matter to be learned and skills to be acquired.

_____ 11 The true view of education is so arranging learning that the child gradually builds up a store house of knowledge that he can use in the future.

_____ 12 One of the big difficulties with modern schools is that discipline is often sacrificed to the interests of children.

_____ 13 The curriculum should contain an orderly arrangement of subjects that represent the best of our cultural heritage.

_____ 14 Discipline should be governed by long-range interests and well-established standards.

_____ 15 Education and educational institutions must be sources of new social ideas; education must be a social program undergoing continual reconstruction.

_____ 16 Right from the very first grade, teachers must teach the child at his own level of the grade he is in.

_____ 17 Children should be allowed more freedom than they usually get in the execution of learning activities.

_____ 18 Children need and should have more supervision and discipline than they usually get.

_____ 19 Learning is essentially a process of increasing one's store of information about the various fields of knowledge.

_____ 20 In a democracy, teachers should help students understand not only the meaning of democracy, but also the meaning of the ideologies of other political systems.

IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONS PROJECT

Session 1 Discussion Guide

What are the ingredients of a good teacher-student relationship?

What do students want from teachers?

What do teachers want from students?

What are the causes of poor teacher-student relationships?

How do teachers turn kids off?

How do students turn teachers off?

Are there other factors that influence teacher-student relationships than just teachers and students themselves? If so, what are they?

Where does the responsibility for improving teacher-student relationships lie?

IMPROVING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONS PROJECT

SESSION II

March 14, 1978

COUNSELLORS' PANEL DISCUSSION GUIDE

What do you see as the tasks of the counsellor and the relative importance of each?

What are students' most common complaints about teachers?

What are teachers' most common complaints about students?

How important are the effects of T.V., teacher unions, parental support or lack of it, popular child rearing theories, and/or other outside influences?

Do students and teachers have unrealistic role expectations of each other? If yes, how might we bring them closer to reality?

How can we remove the institutionalization from the counselling process? Make it more appropriately responsive? Provide willing classroom teachers with easier access to the program?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

What elements exist in a good teacher-student/s relationship that cannot be found in a poor one?

Describe a class where the relationship is good.

Describe a class where the relationship is poor.

Does the behavior in a particular classroom influence other factors in the school building, and if so, how and what are they?

What actions of teachers promote good relationships with students?

What school policies foster good relationships between teacher and student?

Analyze incidents you and your colleagues noted during the last month where attempts were made to improve relationships.

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. JOT DOWN BOTH YOUR PERSONAL THOUGHTS AND ANY IDEAS YOU HAVE HEARD EXPRESSED BY OTHERS DURING THE PROJECT. WE ARE INTERESTED IN IDEAS - NOT SENTENCE STRUCTURE. JUST WRITE DOWN AS MUCH AS YOU NEED TO MAKE YOURSELF CLEAR - NO MORE.

1. What can students do that would lead to better relationships with their teachers? (Discuss both what an individual can do about his own behavior and what he can do about his fellow student's behavior.)

2. What can teachers do to create better relationships with their students? (both in-class and outside-class behaviors should be discussed. Give this a lot of thought.)

3. What is the role of the guidance counsellor in the teacher-student relationship and how can it be made more effective?

4. What can administrators (supervisors, principals or superintendents) do to improve teacher-student relations? (These should be recommendations. Include your reasoning if possible.)

5. How can parents contribute to improving teacher-student relationships?

6. What steps can student councils take to make it easier for teachers and students to relate well to each other?

7. What can school boards do to help improve the relationships between students and teachers? (Be specific. State why you think it would help and why you think it needs to be done.)

8. What should professional educational organizations be expected to contribute to bettering relationships? (P.S.E.A., N.E.A., A.F.T., P.D.K., etc.)

9. How can community groups cooperate to bring about improved relationships? (P.T.A., church, police, adult education groups, etc.)

10. What are some existing policies or procedures in schools that are already helping students and teachers relate positively?

11. What school policies could be instituted that would promote better relationships between teacher and students?

12. What suggestions can you make to schools about how to implement the recommendations made by this project? (If you suggest a procedure, be thorough in explaining how it should be set up and carried out.)

13. How can we best disseminate the results of this project?

14. The following list of words and phrases was culled from reports of the last two meetings. If any of them bring to mind some comment(s) you think is/are pertinent to this project, please jot down your thoughts on the other side of this sheet.

cafeteria	discipline
grades	feelings

intelligence
compulsory attendance
physical punishment
in-school suspension
class rank
ombudsman
grievance procedure
unfeelingness
competition
dedication
uninvolvement
honor rolls and awards
honor courses
socio-economic differences
home
library
home and school visitor
sociologist
psychologist
failure
restrictiveness of school environment
school furniture
preparedness
interruptions
individualization
flexible scheduling
assemblies
home room
activities periods
sports program
Drama
Music
Art
responsibility
English
foreign language
Math
Social Studies
handwriting
Science
Reading
Gym
Health
seating charts